

We Claim:

1. A free stall divider for dividing an open area into separate stalls for animals, comprising:

a substantially horizontally extending base;

at least one mounting member positioned substantially vertically on said base; and

at least one dividing element including a mounting portion coupled to said one mounting member.

2. The free stall divider of claim 1, wherein said mounting portion of said dividing element is removably coupled to said one mounting member.

3. The free stall divider of claim 1, including a self-tapping screw, wherein said mounting portion of said dividing element is removably coupled to said mounting member with said self-tapping screw.

4. The free stall divider of claim 1, wherein said mounting member comprises a tubular socket to which said mounting portion of said dividing element is removably coupled.

5. The free stall divider of claim 1, wherein said base includes first and second ends adapted to receive and secure first and second brisket boards, respectively, with the first and second brisket boards extending in a parallel space relationship to one another, thereby forming a cavity between said first and second brisket boards.

6. The free stall divider of claim 1, wherein said dividing element comprises first and second ends and a joining portion, said first end being substantially centered above said base, said second end comprising said mounting portion, and said joining portion joining said first end to said mounting portion.

7. The free stall divider of claim 6, wherein said joining element comprises a substantially horizontal section and an arcuate section, said horizontal section extending vertically above and horizontally beyond an end of said base, and said arcuate section joining said horizontal section to said mounting portion.

8. The free stall divider of claim 1, wherein said mounting member is welded to said base.

9. The free stall divider of claim 1, wherein said mounting member is removably coupled to said base.

10. The free stall divider of claim 1, wherein said mounting member is formed integrally with said base.

11. A free stall divider for dividing an open area into separate stalls for animals, comprising:

a substantially horizontally extending base;

first and second mounting members positioned substantially vertically on said base; and

first and second dividing elements, wherein said first and second dividing elements include first and second mounting portions, respectively, and wherein said first and second mounting portions are coupled to said first and second mounting members, respectively.

12. The free stall divider of claim 11, wherein said mounting portions of said first and second dividing elements are removably coupled to said first and second mounting members, respectively.

13. The free stall divider of claim 11, including first and second self-tapping screws for removably coupling said first and second dividing elements to said first and second mounting members, respectively.

14. The free stall divider of claim 11, wherein said base includes first and second ends, and said first mounting member is mounted on said base near said first end, and said second mounting member is mounted on said base near said second end.

15. The free stall divider of claim 11, wherein each of said dividing elements includes first and second ends and a joining portion, said first end of each dividing element being substantially centered above said base, said second ends of said dividing elements comprising said first and second mounting portions, and said joining portion of each dividing element joining said first end to said second end.

16. The free stall divider of claim 11, wherein said first dividing element extends horizontally beyond an end of said base in one direction, and said second dividing element extends horizontally beyond an end of said base in the opposite direction, and wherein said first ends of said first and second dividing elements meet substantially above the center of said base, forming a loop such that said loop is longer than said base horizontally and is substantially centered around said base.

17. The free stall divider of claim 16, including at least one self-tapping screw, and a tubular coupling element, wherein said first and second dividing elements

are coupled together with said tubular coupling member and said self-tapping screw.

18. The free stall divider of claim 11 wherein said first and second dividing elements are identical in size and shape.

19. The free stall divider of claim 11, wherein said first and second dividing elements comprise one continuous piece.

20. The free stall divider of claim 11, wherein first and second free stall dividers are positioned in a parallel space relationship, thereby forming a free stall providing living space for two animals head-to-head between said first and second free stall dividers.

21. The free stall divider of claim 11, wherein a plurality of free stall dividers are positioned in a parallel space relationship, thereby forming a plurality of free stalls, each of said free stalls providing a space for two animals head-to-head between adjacent free stall dividers.

22. The free stall divider of claim 21, wherein a cross bar interconnects adjacent free stall dividers to provide additional structure, said cross bar being substantially perpendicular to said free stall dividers.

23. The free stall divider of claim 1, wherein said mounting portion extends substantially vertically to said base.

24. The free stall divider of claim 11, wherein said first and second mounting portions extend substantially vertically to said base.

25. The free stall divider of claim 16, including at least one self-tapping screw, at least one neoprene gasket, and a tubular coupling element, wherein said first and second dividing elements are coupled together with said tubular coupling member, said self-tapping screw, and said neoprene gasket.

26. The free stall divider of claim 11 wherein said first and second mounting portions extend substantially horizontally.

27. The free stall divider of claim 26 wherein said first mounting portions are removably coupled to said second mounting portion.

28. The free stall divider of claim 26, including a tubular coupling element and wherein said first mounting portion is removably coupled to said second mounting portion with said tubular coupling element.

29. The free stall divider of claim 1 wherein said at least one dividing element comprises first and second ends and a joining portion wherein said first and second ends are substantially centered above said base and said joining portion joins said first end to said second end.

30. The free stall divider of claim 29, comprising first and second dividing elements, each having a first end and a second end, wherein the first end of the first dividing element is removably coupled to the first end of the second dividing element, and the second end of the first dividing element is similarly coupled to the second end of the second dividing element.

31. The free stall divider of claim 30, wherein said first end of said first dividing element is removably coupled to the first end of the second dividing element with at least a self-tapping screw and a divider tubular coupling element.

32. The free stall divider of claim 30, wherein said second end of said first dividing element and said second end of said second dividing element are

removably coupled, together with at least a self-tapping screw and a tubular coupling element.

33. The free stall divider of claim 32, wherein said tubular coupling element is welded to said mounting member.

34. The free stall divider of claim 32, wherein said tubular coupling element is substantially T-shaped.

35. The free stall divider of claim 16, further comprising a divider joining member, a first tubular coupling element, a second tubular coupling element, and a third tubular coupling element, wherein said first dividing element is removably coupled to said second dividing element with said first tubular coupling element, the second end of said first dividing element is removably coupled to said first mounting member with said second tubular coupling element, the second end of said second coupling member is removably coupled to the second mounting member with said third tubular coupling element, and said divider joining member is coupled between said second tubular coupling element and said third tubular coupling element.

36. A method for dividing an open area into separate free stalls for animals comprising:

providing a substantially horizontally extending base;
positioning first and second substantially vertically extending
mounting elements on said base;
coupling first and second dividing elements to said first and second
mounting elements, respectively; and
coupling said first and second dividing elements to each other to
form a continuous loop.

37. A free stall system for dividing an open area into separate stalls for cows, said free stall system comprising: at least first and second substantially loop-shaped free stall dividers, wherein said first free stall divider is positioned in a parallel space relationship to said second free stall divider to define a stall for two cows facing each other head-to-head, a center portion of the stall being substantially free of structural elements to provide a lunge area in front of each cow which is substantially free from obstructions, and each side of the stall being substantially free from structural elements to provide a head rest area on each side of each cow, the head rest areas being substantially free of obstructions to each cow's head when the cow is lying down.

38. A free stall divider system for providing stalls of varying widths comprising:

a plurality of substantially horizontally extending base units, the base units arranged in a parallel spaced relationship to each other;

a plurality of mounting members, wherein each mounting member is coupled substantially vertically to a different base unit;

a coupling rail, dimensioned to extend the width of a plurality of stalls, the rail coupled substantially perpendicularly to said mounting members, and extending horizontally from mounting member to mounting member;

a plurality of dividing members, the dividing members being removably coupled to the coupling rail.